1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

extensive rancherias near Punta Narraganseti measure 10 miles by trail from the same aguaje; the half dozen jacales about Campo Navidad are separated by some 15 miles of stony and hilly pathway from the alternative watering places of Tinaja Anita and Arroyo Carrizal;[1] and the huts crowning the great shell-heap of Punta Antigualla—one of the most striking records of immemorial occupancy in America—are nearly or quite 10 miles by trail from Pozo Escalante, and still further from Aguaje Parilla, the nearest sources of potable water. These are but typical instances; and while there are ruined huts (evidently regarded as temporales) near the dead waters of Barranca Salina and Pozo Escalante, they tell the tribal policy of locating habitations in places surprisingly remote from running water. Like other desert folk, the Seri have learned to economize in water-carrying by swigging incredible quantities on their occasional visits to the aguajes; it is probable, too, that their systems are inured, somewhat as are those of the desert animals that survive deprivation of water for days or months, to prolonged abstinence from liquid food; yet it seems safe to assume that at least half of the water required in their vital economy (say 2 or 3 pounds apiece daily, on an average) is consumed after transportation over distances ordinarily ranging from 4 to 12 miles. Under these conditions the Seri have naturally produced a highly developed water industry; they are essentially and primarily water-carriers, and all their other industries are subordinated to this function.

Concordantly with their customs, the Seri have a highly differentiated aquarian device in the form of a distinctive type of olla, which is remarkable for the thinness and fragility of the ware, i. e., for largeness of capacity in proportion to weight. Representative specimens are illustrated in plates XXXII and XXXIII (the former painted, as already described). The dimensions of the two vessels are as follows: painted olla, height 34 cm. (13⅜ inches), mean diameter 32.5 cm. (12¾ inches); plain olla, height 32 cm. (12⅝ inches), mean diameter 31 cm. In both specimens the walls are slightly thickened at the brim, those of the painted vessel measuring about 4 mm. and those of the plain vessel about 4.5 to 5 mm. in thickness. Below the brim the walls are thinned to about 3 mm., as is shown in the fractured neck of the painted specimen. The capacity of these Seri vessels in proportion to their weight, compared with that of typical examples of ware produced by other desert peoples, is shown in the accompanying table.

Comparison of the mean ratios indicates that the Seri ware is almost exactly twice as economical as that of the Pueblos—i. e., that its capacity is twice as great in proportion to the weight of the vessel; and that

[1] The preciousness of water in this hard province was impressed in the 1895 expedition, during which the cost of the commodity, reckoned on the basis of the time and labor involved in obtaining it, was estimated at $10 or $12 per gallon, or about the wholesale price of the finest champagnes.

312 of four miles by a rough and stony trail. In
482 other parts of the island, habitations were occupied as distant as 15 miles from the nearest watering places. Under these conditions the Seris became essentially and primarily water carriers, and all their other industries were subordinated to this function. They learned to economize on water carrying by gulping incredible quantities on their occasional visits to the aguajes, yet, more than half of the water required in their vital economy was consumed after transportation over distances of four to twelve miles. The
312 women were ordinarily the water bearers and
482 for this important business manufactured a
323 distinctive vessel for the purpose. From fine adobe clay they hollowed, expanded and shaped by manipulation with the fingers and without the aid of implements of any sort, a large olla of remarkably light weight in proportion to its capacity. Its mouth was made no larger than the hand that shaped it, thus to prevent spilling on the trail. From
482 yucca fiber a cylindrical cushion was also

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[text continues on p. 197(B)]